

**Thomas Jefferson to Barnabas Bidwell, July 11, 1807,  
The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes.  
Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester  
Ford.**

**TO BARNABAS BIDWELL J. MSS.**

Washington, July 11, '07.

Dear Sir, —Yours of June 27 has been duly received, and altho' wishing your happiness always, I cannot be altogether displeased with a transfer of your services to a department more pleasing to yourself, yet I cannot but lament your loss in Congress. You know that talents cannot be more useful anywhere than there; and the times seem to portend that we may have occasion there for all we possess. You have long ago learnt the atrocious acts committed by the British armed vessels in the Chesapeake & it's neighborhood. They cannot be easily accommodated, altho it is believed that they cannot be justified by orders from their government. We have acted on these principles; 1. to give that government an opportunity to disavow & make reparation; 2, to give ourselves time to get in the vessels, property & seamen, now spread over the ocean; 3, to do no act which might compromit Congress in their choice between war, non-intercourse, or any other measure. We shall probably call them some time in October, having regard to the return of the healthy season, and to the receipt of an answer from Great Britain, before which they could only act in the dark. In the meantime we shall make all the preparations which time will permit, so as to be ready for any alternative.

The officers of the British ships, in a conference with a gentleman sent to them by the Mayor of Norfolk, have solemnly protested they mean no further proceeding without further orders. But the question is whether they will obey the proclamation? If they do not, acts of

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force will probably ensue; still these may lead to nothing further, if their government is just.  
I salute you with great affection.